

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /055 W

-----210828Z 112855 /10

R 200415Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY SUVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6133

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, FJ

SUBJECT: PARLIAMENT PREPARES FOR CONFIDENCE VOTE

REF: (A) SUVA 550, B) SUVA 494

1. PRIMEMIN RATU MARA'S MINORITY ALLIANCE GOVT. WILL PUT ITSELF AND THE DISORGANIZED OPPOSITION NATIONAL FEDERATION PARTY (NFP) TO TEST WHEN IT MOVES VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN RECONVENED PARLIAMENT MAY 24TH. SHOWDOWN WAS ONLY MATTER OF TIME AFTER PRIMEMIN REAPPOINTED WHEN GOV GEN DETERMINED LEADER OF OPPOSITION DID NOT COMMAND CONFIDENCE OF MAJORITY IN PARLIAMENT, THOUGH NFP VICTORITUS IN ELECTIONS OUTCOME OF MOTION IS IN HANDS OF OPPOSITION WHICH COMMANDS THREE VOTE EDGE OVER ALLIANCE.

2. RATU MARA HAS TOLD PRESS THAT IF ALLIANCE WINS CONFIDENCE VOTE, IT WOULD CONTINUE TO GOVERN "ON A TIMETABLD WHICH CAN BE GIVEN AS INFORMATION TO EVERYONE," SCHEDULING ELECTIONS WHEN IT
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CHOOSES BUT CERTAINLY NOT UNTIL ELECTION PROCEDURES ARE IMPROVED. MEANING THAT THE MUCH-CRITICIZED TWO-QWEEK POLLING PERIOD IS TO BE COMPRESSED AND ELECTORAL ROLLS CULLED AND REGULARIZED.

3. IF DEFEATED, SAYS RATU MARA, THE GOVT. WOULD RESIGN. BUT HE MIGHT BE IN NONHURRY TO ASK GOV GEN DISSOLVE PARLIAMENT FOR NEW ELECTIONS, ASSERTING THAT ELECTORAL COMMISSION NEEDS

AS MUCH TIME AS CONSTITUTIONALLY POSSIBLE TO PREPARE FOR
REPLAY. THE PRIME MIN ACKNOWLEDGED, HOWEVER, THAT HIS
"INSTINCT" TO DELAY, AS HE PUTS IT, IS WEAKENED BY RECOGNITION
THIS WOULD AFFORD SMALL FIJIAN NATIONALIST PARTY, WHOSE SPOILER
ROLE CHIEFLY RESPONSIBLE HIS DEFEAT, MORE TIME TO GAIN ADDITIONAL
VOTES.

4. COMMENT: INDIAN OPPOSITION, SQUABBLING AMONG THEMSELVES
AS USUAL, IS NOW TRYING TO DECIDE WHEAT ITS POSITION ON VOTE
OF CONFIDENCE SHOULD BE. GIVEN INTENSE INTERNAL STRAINS OF PARTY
AND ITS LIVELY APPREHENSION OF BEING PUT IN POSITION OF GOVERNING,
MOST OBSERVERS ARE FORECASTING ENOUGH NFP ABSTENTIONS ON CONFIDENCE
MOTION TO PERMIT ALLIANCE TO RULE FOR NEXT SEVERAL MONTHS AT
LEAST.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 20-May-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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